

Tabulation of Summary Data from the 1897 and 1900 City Directories

	1897			1900		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>
Population	7,673	49%	51%	8,124	44%	56%
Occupation Listed	6,481	3,478	3,003	5,703	2,497	3,206

Of the total population listed in the city directory, a slightly smaller number listed their occupation in their entry. It is assumed that if no occupation was listed, the individual was not employed. A more detailed study of the directory data will be made available upon completion of work by Tod Hamilton.

at Chapel Hill to study city directories and census data.³ Economics doctoral student Tod Hamilton took the lead in the project and oversaw data entry and managed the databases to provide the Wilmington Race Riot Commission with multiple reports concerning the data for Wilmington. A summary of Hamilton's directory findings can be found in this chapter and more detail can be found in the Appendix.

New in-depth, computer-aided analysis of the 1897 and 1900 city directory data provided revealing information about the city's economic environment for the black community. Entries for both races in the residential section of the directory, including all associated information such as occupation and addresses for businesses and residences, were entered into a database.⁴

Concern was expressed that the data may have been skewed along racial or gender lines by the publishers when the directory was compiled. However, after review of the data, it was clear that the directories were relatively reflective of the city's racial diversity both before and after the violence of 1898.⁵ Because of this conclusion about the city directory data, and because the directories are the only known data sets containing information about black employment so soon before and after November 1898, they were used to draw some conclusions about the impact of both the violence and the white supremacy campaign on the city's African American economic outlook.⁶

Consolidation of the data into 15 occupational categories reflective of the peculiar business climate associated with Wilmington's port status demonstrates that the city offered a diverse working environment for the city's African

³ The first comprehensive study of occupations using the city directory was done by Hayumi Higuchi for a master's thesis at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1980. Another study of the city directory data was completed by Sue Cody for a thesis at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in 2000. Further study of city directory data was performed for this project in 2002, prior to the joint project with UNC-CH. Cody cited the considerable drawbacks to using the directory data. Cody surmised that the directories were incomplete lists of city residents and were, at best, only a sample of citizens, skewed by race, gender, geography, and age.

⁴ This portion of the study did not take into account gender or age since those two variables were not provided by the directories. However, some occupations traditionally held by women have been identified, and some marginal conclusions about their

work experiences can be drawn from the directory data.

⁵ Both directories were compiled by the same company. It can be assumed that the data collection methods that would skew whether or not someone was entered into the city directory were similar for both directory years. It is therefore safe to assume that people from any given occupation or neighborhood would be equally as likely to be included or excluded from both directories, making the directories mutually comparable.

⁶ The only other available information on occupation would be from the census, but the 1890 census was destroyed by fire in Washington, D. C.